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Mount Anthony Union High School student appointed to Harassment, Hazing, and Bullying Prevention Advisory Council

Montpelier, VT – Education Commissioner Armando Vilaseca appointed Griffin Thomas, a senior at Mount Anthony Union High School (MAU), to the Harassment, Hazing, and Bullying Prevention Advisory Council.

“We have a wonderful opportunity to invite students to be a part of this advisory council,” said Commissioner Vilaseca. “Student voices are valuable and I feel it’s important for them to be represented in this state-wide effort to support schools and students,” he said.

Thomas began serving as the student representative to the Mount Anthony School Board at the end of his freshman year. He also served on a MAU committee examining aspects of school culture, delving into students’ perceptions about school safety. He is a para-educator at Mount Anthony Union Middle School's Mosaic Program, which allows him the opportunity to mentor students from all backgrounds.

“As a former victim of bullying myself, and a current high school student, I feel that I am in a unique position to share my and other students’ voices,” said Thomas.

The advisory council is comprised of seventeen individuals with deep and diverse experience. Tracey Tsugawa, Vermont Human Rights Commission, serves as the council chair.

“We are so pleased to have student representation on the advisory council as they will provide us with unique insights into the overall climate in schools and the particular dynamics of bullying, hazing, and harassment,” said Tsugawa. “Their contributions will be invaluable and our work would be incomplete without their voices and perspectives,” she said.

The council held its first meeting on August 31. Thomas attended the meeting remotely via the Learning Network (LNV) of Vermont, a school-based video-conferencing system. There are 118 LNV sites around the state; the sites are mostly schools, but also include the DOE, the legislature, adult learning centers, and technical centers.

Information about the Commissioner’s Harassment, Hazing, and Bullying Prevention Advisory Council is available online: http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/council_bullying.html.

For more information, contact Tracey Tsugawa, Council Chair, at (802) 828-2493 or tracey.tsugawa@state.vt.us.

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